

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0005] with the following amended paragraph:

[0005] A sucker rod must not only support the loads generated by the pumping of the fluids, but must also support the weight of the other rods therebelow. Therefore, sucker rod load increases proportionate to the well depth and length of the sucker rod string within the well. In order to minimize over loading on the upper rods, smaller diameter rods are typically used further down the string. For example, a well may utilize 1" diameter rod at the top, then step down to 7/8" diameter rod at some point, and then to $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter rod still further down. This is commonly referred to as "tapering". Since the rod string must translate the reciprocating force during both stroking directions, the weight of the rods must be maintained in such a manner that the rod string remains in tension on both the upstroke and downstroke. If the weight of the upper rods exceeds the force required for pumping on the down stroke, the rod string can go into compression during the down stroke leading to buckling buckling. To keep the rods straight and in tension, a large diameter rod, called a sinker bar, may be used. This large diameter rod is sufficiently heavy and stiff to resist buckling during the down stroke.